

A. SUPPLY OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS

I. PRESENT POSITION

A great many New Zealand schools, especially in the North Island, are at present full to overflowing, and there is an acute shortage of school buildings in many areas. The main reasons for this shortage are—

(a) *The Double Check to the School-building Programme that resulted from the Financial Depression and the War.*—Far from being in a strong position to meet new demands, the Education Department is still struggling to catch up arrears. The following table shows the position in terms of capital expenditure on schools between the years 1930 and 1945 :—

Table No. 120.—Table showing Capital Expenditure on School Buildings

Financial year ended—	Amount. £	Financial year ended—	Amount. £
31st March, 1930 ..	443,885	31st March, 1939 ..	727,078
31st March, 1931 ..	501,344	31st March, 1940 ..	851,726
31st March, 1932 ..	259,148	31st March, 1941 ..	555,572
31st March, 1933 ..	52,623	31st March, 1942 ..	465,686
31st March, 1934 ..	51,435	31st March, 1943 ..	207,391
31st March, 1935 ..	62,183	31st March, 1944 ..	236,137
31st March, 1936 ..	169,733	31st March, 1945 ..	477,393
31st March, 1937 ..	276,732	31st March, 1946 ..	1,187,546
31st March, 1938 ..	554,569		

(b) *The Increased Number of Births* in New Zealand within recent years. The following table gives the figures from 1930 to 1945 :—

Table No. 121.—Table showing the Number of Live Births each Year since 1930 (exclusive of Maoris)

Year.	Number of Births.	Year.	Number of Births.
1930	26,797	1938	27,249
1931	26,622	1939	28,833
1932	24,884	1940	32,771
1933	24,334	1941	35,100
1934	24,322	1942	33,574
1935	23,965	1943	30,311
1936	24,837	1944	33,599
1937	26,014	1945	37,007

It will be seen that the schools, which had become adapted to an intake of 24,000 to 26,000 pupils a year had, within a very short time, to cater for an intake of 35,000. The number of births in New Zealand rose by 46 per cent. between the years 1935 and 1941. The infant-rooms are this year trying to cope with the peak intake from the record number of births in 1941.

It should be noted, however, that even yet the total primary school roll (195,799 in 1944), although higher than the 191,662 for 1935, is still well below the peak figure of 213,048 for 1931. Much of the accommodation used in 1931, of course, is now obsolete or demolished, but much more has been rendered useless by the drift of population from the South to the North, and from the central city areas to the suburbs.

(c) *Movements of Population.*—The relatively rapid increase of population in the North Island has created school-building problems in some areas that are much greater than the gross figures for the Dominion would show. In the Auckland metropolitan area, for example, the increase in the number of births between 1935 and 1941 was 86 per cent., which means that in 1946 the Department has to provide in that area for 1,450 more entrants to the infant-schools than in 1940. The corresponding increase for Wellington City and the Hutt Valley was 67 per cent.